# The Editor and the News

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## Synthetic Rivalry

On the eve of President Eisenhower's special address to the nation and the world on the Berlin crisis, and just before British Prime Minister Macmillan comes to the United States, some segments of the British press—and British correspondents in Washington—are trying to tear down the President's role and build up that of the Prime Minister. Such synthetic rivalry, whether British or American, is as foolish as it is inaccurate.

There is no question of the vital role being played in the present crisis by both the President and the Prime Minister. Happily each has something different and important to contribute. London's two leading newspapers have tumbled into pitfalls. The Sunday Times said: "Washington without the strong hand of Secretary Dulles lacks authority, but after the Macmillan-Eisenhower meeting a new sense of direction is expected." This is a plain hint that Mr. Macmillan will supply the sense of direction.

And the Observer says that America, and France and Germany, too, have "grudgingly accepted the leadership of Mr. Macmillan because no other leadership was forthcoming." In London's mass-circulation Sunday Dispatch another correspondent rings the changes on the allegedly "weary, disillusioned" President.

### President Found Active

Happily, there are better informed correspondents. One of them, Henry Brandon of the Sunday Times, cables from Washington that President Eisenhower "is bravely trying to fill the vacuum left by Mr. Dulles' absence. He has been stung into action by insinuations that Mr. Macmillan has, by default, become the leader of the Western alliance. He has now given an impression of an ebullience which has not been found in Washington since his heart attack. Mr. Macmillan, therefore, will find a more active Eisenhower who will want to lead rather than be led."

I was in Washington for the last two days, and the impression of a very much more active and determined Eisenhower is certainly the one I found. I talked with many men who had been in frequent and close contact with the President during the past few days. Their picture was that of a man well informed in his facts, crisp and dynamic in his views, definitely in command of the situation. The American people will have a chance to form their own impressions Monday night, March 16. But those close to the President feel he has never been in more active touch with a challenge than he is in the Berlin crisis and its bearing on broad problems of defense and security.

It may be true in part that the President was forced into being his own Secretary of State because of Mr. Dulles' incapacity. Unquestionably he realizes the transcendent seriousness of the Berlin situation. It may be he is stung into action by many criticisms of his administration. It may be that he feels his subordinates have not fully accomplished the responsibilities he has delegated to them. But jealousy of the leadership role of Prime Minister Macmillan is doubtless the last and least concern in the President's thinking.

### Useful Task Performed

Mr. Macmillan has just completed the enormously useful task of going from London to Moscow to Paris to Bonn. With his patience—which he showed well in Moscow—with his talent for clarification and conciliation, he seems to have drawn the Western Big Four fairly close together. There still exist serious conflicts among the Western powers, particularly with the sensitive, proud, and ambitious President de Gaulle. And, of course, Chancellor Adenauer firmly resists any signs of Western conciliation.

Mr. Macmillan emerges from Paris and Bonn with outward agreement, at least. Now he brings his collected views to Washington. He is doing what Mr. Dulles formerly did, and perhaps he is doing it with more flexibility and finesse. His is a role which the President could not possibly have filled, nor would anyone else at just this time. And so once again British and American statesmanship complement rather than rival one another.

Chancellor Adenauer, whose nerves are as cool as anyone's, has spoken out bluntly in Hannover. He told a meeting of his Christian Democratic Party that he thought the present Soviet threat was not as dangerous as last year when France was in political crisis.

"I think there will be no war this time, either," he said. "The Russians do not want a war themselves. They make threats, and they understand how to make the world worry. But they are really after something else." This something else, he explained, was to extend Soviet power so as to separate West Germany from its allies, to get hold of the entire West European community with its 160 million people, and thus achieve strength greater than the United States.

This is a realistic appraisal of the situation. But it does not specify the means by which the West should ride out the crisis, and preserve the freedoms of Berlin. On that point, the Defense argument which is roaring through Washington is highly pertinent. President Eisenhower last week flatly dismissed Dean Acheson's theory that a ground war for Berlin might be fought, or that

mobilization would be useful. As the President said: "We certainly are not going to fight a ground war in Europe. What good would it do to send a few more thousands, or indeed even a few divisions, of troops to Europe?" Here the President spoke from knowledge that the Soviet Union, with its vast reservoir of men under arms, could speedily outnumber any possible mobilization of Western forces.

## Missile Gap Looming?

But the questions defense specialists ask in Washington are twofold: Is there going to be a missile gap—a period in the early 1960's when the Soviet Union will so decisively outnumber the United States in intercontinental ballistic missiles that it could be tempted to fatal adventure? And second, has the United States made the mistake of putting all its eggs into the nuclear or total-war basket, without retaining capacity to fight a smaller war? Or, to put it more broadly, in its earnest zeal to achieve a balanced budget, is the United States sacrificing the defense the nation urgently needs?

These are questions on which authorities gravely differ. If there will be a missile gap, if the United States needs more capacity in conventional warfare, if budget-cutting has been pressed too hard, then these are grave indictments of national policy. But men so experienced and dedicated as the President and Secretary McElroy quite clearly do not believe—in their unparalleled knowledge of the facts—that such dangers are in being or are likely. And although the President's interest in the economic stability of a balanced budget is quite plain, nobody who knows him can imagine he would place the nation's fate in jeopardy for that reason. In short, there are conflicting evaluations of the facts, although generally speaking those who criticize present policies are largely those who do not know as many facts as those who support the existing policies. Or so it would seem.

## Appeasement Ruled Out

Robert Amory, Deputy Chief of the Central Intelligence Agency, in one of his very rare speeches, said the other day: "The Soviets haven't got what it takes rationally to challenge us this spring." He said the Soviets think in largs gobs of time, and wouldn't get into a nuclear war this spring unless forced into it by circumstances. As to what they might do in 1960 or 1965, Mr. Amory said with great realism: "They don't know and we don't know." But he added the Soviets are generally working on the theory that it will take 15 years to develop their economy. So he felt that if the West remains resolute on Berlin, it will be the Soviet Union that will back down.

There is total support in Washington for firm resistance, and although members of Congress continue to sound off in all directions, none of them urges the administration toward any form of appeasement. The nation is united, and after March 16 presumably will be better informed.

The struggle between President Nasser's United Arab Republic and Premier Kassem's Communist-infiltrated Iraq continues unabated. Border incidents are alleged on both sides of the Syrian-Iraqi frontier. After the failure of the pro-Nasser revolt in Mosul, last week, Mr. Nasser has turned daily his oratory against the Baghdad regime.

Speaking in Damascus, he said the Communists are trying to establish a Red dictatorship in Iraq. He said they had attempted the same thing in Egypt, trying to win over some leaders. "I was among them," he added frankly. "I refused to join them because I could not accept heresy and insubordination. I understand their doctrine and know many of them."

Meantime, correspondents were taken up to Mosul and saw the aftermath of the revolutionary attempt. It is clear that the rebellion was inept, short-lived, and has been completely crushed. But Nasser opposition to the Kassem regime is not over by any means. Thus the Arab world is riven by a deep cleavage, with communism seeking to make the most of it. The outcome is not in sight.

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